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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ARABIC LITERATURE OF THE JEWS.

II (*continued*).

28. *Mohammedans and Christians taken for Jews and the contrary.*

SOME of the Arabic authors translated at that period appear in the reports sometimes twice, and have been considered as Jews; so, for instance, the problematic alchemist of olden times, KHALID BEN JEZID, perhaps occasioned through a corruption of Indorum into Iudaeorum¹. With that we connect the general warning against making Arabic authors Jews, which has been done in consequence of different circumstances connected with each other, and making an exact classification impracticable; but we shall try to discern some groups.

(a) Arabs have been considered as Jews, because they are mentioned in Jewish sources; for instance, some old Karaïtic writings describe different sects or philosophical schools, of which probably Christians and Jews formed part. The importance of this fact is not to be pursued in this place; we point only to the strange fact that the names of a founder of sects, Abu Haschim al-Djubbai, and his son have been transferred from the Karaïtes to their own heads, Sefet and Levy, as I have stated in the *Catalogue of the Leyden MSS.*, p. 170² (cf. § 20, p. 521, n. 153).

¹ See the correction of my former suggestion (*Zur pseudopigr. Lit.*, p. 50) in *Jeschurun* (German), edited by Kobak, V, p. 188.—Different instances are given in my article, "Pseudo-Juden," in *Monatsschrift*, 1893-4, p. 39 ff.

² Pinsker, 119, has overlooked the words וְקָן בְּעַל הַחֲכָמָה and וְנָ' ב' הָרֵעָה in *Catal. Lugd.*, l. c. Geiger first believed my combination to be erroneous.

(b) Some Arabs have been considered as Jews because their works have been transcribed in Hebrew characters or have been translated into the Hebrew language. A striking instance is the family of Ibn Zohr, vulgo *Avenzoar*, whose members figure even in scientific works of the present day as Jews. A similar circumstance arose from the names. The Arabs adopted some biblical names with some slight variation (see § 11); the Jews restored the original form, and the authors so quoted were considered as Jews. In this way the celebrated noble Arabic astrologer and philosopher, abu Jakub Ishak ben Jusuf al-Kindi, and the Spanish astronomer, abu Ibrahim Ishak al-Zarkali, became articles in the *Bibliotheca Hebr.*, by Wulfius; the celebrated Syriac Christian translator, Honein ben Ishak, became first חֲנַיָּה, and already in old sources he is called "the Israelite" (*Catal. Bodl.*, p. 1046); in later times he became חֲנַיָּה הַיִּזְרְעֵלִי instead of ha-Nozeri (the Christian). The physician, Ali ibn Ridhwan, became רְעִי עֲלִי, which was pronounced Eli, so that this name became equivocal (see above, § 20, n. 536). This goes so far that a translator of the gospel was changed into Pharaoh the Hebrew, a triple misunderstanding of abu'l-Faradj bar Hebräus (*Catal. Lugd.*, p. 70, n); Luca ben Costa, apud Grässe (*Literär-geschichte*, II, 2, 791), is the Syriac Christian Costa ben Luca. We find the Hebrew אֲבוּ נָסֵר, which is the translation of the Arabic abu Nas'r (al-Farabi); the physician, ibn al-Djezzar, became בֶּן מַכְלָרִי (filius Macellarii).

As to the pretended Jews of the name Muhammed, we refer to § 8; on the other hand we have seen (*ibid.*) that even the name "Israil" is rather to be found with Christian than Jewish authors; Ibn Israil and Ibn Scham'an (Simon) need not be names of Jews.

(c) Besides the uncertainty and all sorts of ignorance there are all sorts of deceit which might be discerned as pious, erudite, and speculative in the commercial sense of the word. Polemic authors in their controversial tracts feign a Jewish adversary. Alphonsus Bonihominis makes Samuel

Marokkanus a Jewish convert. Celebrated Muhammedan teachers of tradition are made Jews by Casiri to hit the ridiculousness of both with one stroke. Carmoly, on the contrary, in his *Histoire des médecins*, fabricates Jewish proselytes and famous professors elsewhere unknown—in *majorem Dei (et sui) gloriam*. Jehuda al-Musulmani, whose magic, said to have been written about 685–98 and dedicated to Abd al-Malik ben Merwan (MS. Paris, 1124), is probably a fiction¹.

Very rare is the counterpart, viz. that Jews have been made Moslems, as, for instance, Sahl ben Bischr al-Israïli in Latin translations has become Zael Ismaelita, &c. (§ 36), who in the cosmological work of Ristoro d'Arezzo, edited by E. N. R. Narducci, Rome, 1859, p. 7, is called Zale, Aghazel, and in the note has been explained as Gazzali! With this remark I will not deny that there may be still detected many Jews; but more of this in a later part of this essay; here the instance ibn Halfarn (see § 20) will suffice.

29. *The Arabic Works known to the Jews.*

In general the knowledge of Arabic literature among the Jews principally comprehends medicine, astronomy (including astrology), and philosophy. A greater part of these books is derived from classical literature. The prominent authors are ARISTOTLE, PLATO, HIPPOKRATES, GALEN, PTOLEMAEUS, EUCLID, and those of the so-called "intermediate writings" (the "little astronomer")². Single writings of

¹ The title (quoted by Sédillot, *Introd. aux Proleg.* d'Olough Begh, p. cxlviii) "Kitab al-Anwar wa-Mafati'h al-Abrar," &c., is not to be found in Slane's *Catal. of the Arab. MSS. in Paris*, where n. 2675 has Mafati'h Israr 'Ulum al-Anbijâ. D'Herbelot, III, 36 (Germ. ed.) s.v. "Kitab alanuar," and II, 824 s.v. Jehuda al-Mosleman, is the source of Wolf, III, p. 334, n. 753 c. A similar title, omitted by D'Herbelot, is "Kitab al-Anwar wa-Mifta'h al Surur wa 'l-Afkar fi Maulad al-Nabi al-Mukhtar," by abu 'l-Hasan Ahmed ben Abd Allah Bakri in seven parts, ap. *H. Kh.*, I, 483, n. 1421.

² See my article in *Zeitschr. für Mathematik*, vol. X. Josef S. del Medigo (ap. Geiger, *Melo Chofnajim*, p. 34) gave up his design to learn the Arabic

Hippokrates and Galen, Ptolemaeus and others are only known by Jewish sources, as well as some pseudo-epigraphical works, for instance, the pseudo-Aristotelic *De pomo*¹, the dialogue of pseudo-Galen and Muria, translated from the Hebrew into Latin by King Manfred or by his order. A supposed "book of the *intellect*" attributed to Aristotle, owes its existence to an error; it is really a "book of justice."

Of course, single scholars were well versed in literature, and composed literary directions for beginners. As such we find at the same time a teacher and his pupil—the latter probably preceding—Maimonides and his pupil, Josef ibn Aknin, whose work, *Medicine of the Soul*, contains a chapter on the relation between teacher and pupil, which has been by chance translated into Hebrew (*Hebr. Übersetz.*, p. 33). His master, Maimonides, in a letter to Samuel ibn Tibbon, gives to this translator some literary hints. A similar passage of an unedited work by Samuel Jehuda Abbas has been lately published.

30. Other Branches.

Besides the mentioned disciplines we point here to the lexicography: one of the most celebrated Arabic works, the dictionary *Kitab* (Book) *al-'Ein*, attributed to Khalil ben Ahmed, was principally used by some translators out of the Arabic, and by abu 'l-Rabi' (Salomo) ibn Ja'isch (ob. 1345?), who compiled a glossary on difficult words used by Arabic poets². Arabic philologists are mentioned by an old Karaïte (*Catal. Lugd.*, p. 111). Abu Ali al-Ma'arri is

language, because "all the beautiful writings composed in that language are borrowed with few alterations from the Greek."

¹ Dieterici makes the author a Jew, without the least testimonial or argument, *Hebr. Übersetz.*, pp. 267 and xxvii. In a Persian mystic drama Muhammed dies, smelling an apple presented to him by an angel (De Gubernatis, *Mythologie des Plantes*, I, 302).

² *Hebr. Bibliogr.*, XIX, 94 (so read in *Hebr. Übersetz.*, p. 64, n. 130). The *Kitab al-'Ein* is also quoted by Abraham ibn Barun (Bacher, in *Stade's Zeitschr. für Alttest. Wiss.*, 1894, p. 201).

quoted by Moses ibn Ezra in his *Muhadhara*, and in rules for killing the beast, by an anonymous writer, who is probably Samuel ibn Djam' (*Hebr. Übersetz.*, p. 64; *J. Q. R.*, III, 618). Of the lexicographer Djauhari a curious anecdote will be reported later. As to history and chronology we point to a passage of Mas'udi (ob. 958), quoted by Jehuda ben Nissim (fourteenth century) in his commentary on the *Perakim*, attributed to R. Elieser, with respect to the dubious word "Hazerwan¹," which moreover occurs in the preface of ibn Ezra to his translation of the astronomical tables of al-Muthanna. Sentences of Honein's Collection² are most probably introduced in the collection of sentences (with the title *Mibchar ha-Peninim*), attributed to Salomo ben Gabirol, and certainly translated by Jehuda ibn Tibbon, whose contemporary, Josef Kimchi, seems also to know Honein's *Apophthegmata*. Sometimes before Charisi, Gabirol (*Ethics*, I, 3) quotes *Buzurgmi'hr* (that is, the great mithra), but the word has been disfigured in print³. Abu Man'sur al-Dhahiri of Yemen (fifteenth cent.) quotes various Arabic authors (see the essay of Kohut, 18, p. 41).*

¹ Reinaud, *Mémoire sur l'Inde* (1850, p. 529, probably communicated by Munk); *ZDMG.*, XXIV, 389, n. 4.

² H. Derenbourg, *Les traducteurs arabes d'auteurs grecs et l'auteur musulman des Aphorismes des Philosophes* (Mélanges-Weil, Extrait, 1898), believes that the original work in the very few existing copies is that of a Musulman, called in the MS. of the Escorial Muhammed ben Ali, &c., al-An'sari (quite unknown elsewhere), or at least worked up by him? The discussion of this hypothesis cannot be the subject of an occasional note, where a sign of interrogation must suffice.

³ גומהר (read גומהר); "Abu zurg (!) Mihir," ap. Grätz, V, 18; "Gumhur," ap. Rosin (I have only noted "p. 165," but not the essay, which is printed after 1893, as it seems), who quotes Dukes, *Salomo ben Gabirol*, p. 115, where the name is corrupted into "Dschumur," Vezir of Anuschirwan. But see my correction in *Serapeum*, 1863, p. 210, n. 18, and other quotations in *Hebr. Übersetz.*, pp. 382, 874. Sayings of "Barzachumehr" (sic) after the *Djawidan Khired* in Molla Firuz Library (*Catal.*, p. 222), remind us of the compilation of Miskaweih described by De Sacy (see *Hebr. Bibliogr.*, II, 118). Recent Karaïtic authors give the name B. to Chiskijja (*Hebr. Bibliogr.*, XIII, 106, not known to Cazés, *Revue des Ét. Juives*, XII, 82, 83, quoted by Kaufmann in *Die Haggadah von Sarajevo*, Wien, 1898, p. 298).

The folklore which from its source in India inundated all Europe, did not find idle spectators in the Jews; they took an active part in it. I have detected in the Hebrew book, *Prince and Dervis*, by Abraham ibn Chisdai, a free translation of the celebrated book, *Barlaam and Josafat*, which really is an Arabic and Christian free translation of a biography of Buddha. The prominent fables called *Khalila wa-Dimna*, the Persian translation of which is quoted by Hai Gaon and the *Mischle Sindabar* (tales of Sindbad), have been partly transmitted by Jews into European languages and translated into Hebrew. The Arabic parable of a controversy between men and animals was translated by Kalonymos in one week.

If the fables of Lokman have escaped the attention of the Jews and have not been translated into Hebrew before it was done by a Christian scholar of the last century, it proves its late and Christian origin, recognized in our times, especially by the late J. Derenbourg¹.

Before Hariri was translated by Charisi and imitated in the Hebrew *Tachkemoni*, there existed Makamas by Josef ibn Aknin and Ibn Zakbal (Schorr, *he-Chaluz*, III, 154). The ס' המוסר of Josef ibn Chrispin (twelfth cent.) is only an imitation of Arabic prototypes, and was itself translated by Josef ibn 'Hasan, elsewhere unknown, in fifty Arabic Kassidas, with the title מִהַמֶּסֶד אֶלְאֶרְאֶה (copied A. 1467, *Hebr. Übersetz.*, p. 884). The extemporized verses of the Resch Geluta UKBA (beginning of the tenth century), mentioned by Abraham Sacut (Juchasin, fol. 120 b, ap. Grätz, V, 29, *Lieder*), need not be of his own composition.

31. Poetry.

The Koran itself, with its intentional rhymes, has important rhetorical and poetical passages, which have even been

¹ Berachja ha-Nakdan has, according to my opinion, nothing to do directly with Arabic literature (*Hebr. Übersetz.*, pp. 275, 578); K. Warneke, *Marie de France*, Halle, 1898, p. xlviii, corroborates this opinion against the suggestions of Mr. J. Jacobs.

used as arguments to prove its divine origin¹. Whether a great part of the real poetry of the Arabs has been much read by Jews, is a question which requires a more special investigation, but certainly single Jews were versed in that part of literature. Jona ibn Djana'h, Moses ibn Ezra, and Salomo ibn Gabirol (see below) quote verses of the Arabs.

It is known that poetry, at least what the Arabs called poetry, already at an early period was an ingredient of life², in later times an essential element of culture, the finish of the preparatory sciences which we call "humaniora³," finally an indispensable arabesque of literary works of all kinds. This certainly has contributed to the credit and importance of the quotations of sacred and profane hymns in all sorts of Jewish literature, even in Halachic and Kabbalistic writings. The matter of that poetry, of course, is important; the true old natural poetry of the Arabs (up to the seventh century) was not congenial to Jewish ideas. The name of the "golden verses" (Mudsahhabât) is quoted by the grammarian, Isak ben Elieser (in the thirteenth, not twelfth, century), but only to explain the connexion of מכתם with כהם פו (Hebr. Übersetz., pp. 851, 917, 920). The later art-, court-, and school-poetry grew more and more unnatural, and in consequence more abstract, less specific and national; hence it is no wonder that Jews did not hesitate to read and to quote it. About the mutual influence of these quoted verses and sentences, and the different forms of popular poetry, see *Jewish Literature*, § 20, and the article "Typen," in Kobak's *Jeschurun*, VIII and IX. A special investigation of these quotations, how far they are, directly or indirectly, taken from other writings, and of what kind of writings, is still wanted. Therefore some detached remarks must suffice here.

¹ The verses are "miracles," hence נס in the Hebrew translation of the Cusari.

² V. Schack, *Poesie und Kunst der Araber in Spanien*, &c.

³ Josef ibn Aknin, in Ersch and Gruber's *Realencykl.*, sect. II, vol. 31, p. 51, n. 39 d, and Hebr. Übersetz., p. 33. Instances of quotations are eruditely collected by Dukes, in his קריים נחל.

The most important quotations that I have occasionally noted serve different purposes, for the most part exegetical and philological ones; for instance, ap. *ibn Koreisch*, *abu 'l-Walid*, and *Tanchum Jeruschalmi*. Ethic-philosophical purposes were pursued by *ibn Gabirol* (about 1050) in his *Ethics*, and by *Josef ibn Aknin* in his above-mentioned work (f. 20). Ibn Gabirol quotes some poems of the Arabs which have been omitted by the Hebrew translator Jehuda ibn Tibbon; the whole Arabic book is prepared for publication. Moses ibn Ezra composed (about 1138) a monograph on Hebrew poetry in its connexion with, and relation to, the Arabic; his similar work on Hebrew rhetoricisms has been lost. Moses has certainly studied with great zeal the poetical productions of the Arabs, and the fragments, cited in his works, are also of literary interest. He, in general, represents the æsthetical criticism, applied to the single objects, and on the other side to the formal-rhetorical element. His Arabic style is extremely elegant but overcharged¹. A little later Samuel ibn Abbas (the renegade) frequently quotes in his writings Arabic poets (*Ahlwardt*, n. 6381), which he had read, being still a Jew².

Maimonides must here, as everywhere, be judged from his own point of view. He is, although an admirer of Aristotle, a rigorous, consistent, ideal philosopher, like Plato, and poetry was likewise not in his favour; but he hardly had occasion to burn his own poems, which Jehuda ha-Levi is said to have done³. His occasional remarks must be understood by their context. In the *More*, I, 2, he admonishes not to read fugitively the Bible, "the

¹ A profound article on this remarkable book by M. Schreiner appeared in the *Revue des Ét. Juives*, 1891, and separately (1892); I have appended an index of persons and works quoted in that work to the Catalogue of the Hebrew MSS. in the Royal Library of Berlin, Abth. 2, p. 128 f.

² See the article on my MS. of his *If'ham al-Jahud* by Schreiner in the *Monatsschr. f. Gesch. u. W. des Jud.*, 1898, also in a separate edition.

³ According to Moses Rieti, quoted by Elia Ch. ben Benjamin of Genazzano (MS. Munich, n. 112, *Catal. Bodl.*, p. 1986).

book of guidance (הדאיה, a technical designation of the Koran) of the old and the later ones," as one is used, in the hours drawn off from drunkenness and debauchery, to turn over the leaves of chronicles and poetry (חאריך מן אלתואריך או שער מן אלאשעאר). Munk translates the word which we rendered "chronicles" by *histoire*; ibn Tibbon gives the Hebrew דברי הימים. Schemtob ibn Schemtob remarks that this is the custom of the Christian priests (כומרי אדום). In his introduction to the articles of creed, inserted in his commentary on the Talmud (*Tractat Synhedrin*, chap. X or XI), Maimonides blames "the books" composed by Ben Sira because of his physiognomical remarks¹; he says that there is neither science nor profit, but only wasting of time with empty things. נחו הרה אלכתב אלמוגודה ענד אלעדב מן כתב אלתואריך [so read] וסייר אלמלוך ואנסאב אלערב וכתב אלגאנאני ונחזאה מן אלכתב אלתי לא עלם פיהא ולא פאידה ספר דברי הימים והנהגת ויחוסי. Hebrew: אלא תלאף אלומאן פקט הערכים וספרי הנגן. Thus Maimonides does not speak of real history as Chwolsohn² believes, but of chronicles as we have said, and the poetry which he abhorred is not specially the Arabic, which results from the above quoted passage, viz. his commentary on *Aboth* I, 17, where he measures poetry with the strict scale of tendency³. He remarks, that if some sheikhs and pious men do not admit an Arabic poem at festivities and weddings—be it in praise of God or of wine—on account of the language, but admit such a poem if it is Hebrew—it is absolute absurdity. On the contrary, if the question turns upon the language, whether vernacular or Arabic or Hebrew, and the poem is such as excites mean passions, it is more objectionable to use the Hebrew language, because it is at once a profanation of the sacred language⁴. We may here remark that Maimo-

¹ The passage alluded to is וליקן עבדן.

² See my *Zur pseudopigr. Lit.*, p. 5.

³ Comp. the Resp. quoted by Goldziher in *Monatsschr.*, XXII, 178.

⁴ Maimonides might have chosen a milder expression if he opposed the Responsum of a Gaon (?); see the semi-spurious collection שערי חסודה (*Hebr. Bibliogr.*, I, 57, n. 152), on זמיר דמנא, which is not a Hebrew song, and on

nides boasts of his having read all works of superstition. Since we know that Maimonides composed a Hebrew hymn, we might suppose that he also composed Arabic ones; however, history must not be written by suppositions. Dernburg (Geiger's *Zeitschr.*, I, 105) points to an Arabic MS. of the Escorial (n. 354, ap. Casiri), where there is an anthology of the poems of Abdallah ben Maimun, born at Cordova: אלאזלי: אבי עבר אלאה בן מימון אלקרמבי אלעזלי; I do not believe this author to be a Jew at all.

Certainly different from Maimuni is *Mose ben Tobi*, the author of the poem אלסבעינייה (also translated into Hebrew by Salomo da Piera¹), recently edited by Hirschfeld. J. Gavison (1605) translates a poem of Gazzali (reprinted by L. Dukes in his שירי שלמה). *Abraham ibn Chisdai*, in his translation of the ethical work of Gazzali, substitutes Hebrew poems of Samuel ha-Nagid and others for the Arabic texts.

A characteristic of the Arabian poetry, specially of its erotic poems, is to be found in some rhymes attributed to Abraham ibn Esra, quoted by Jochanan Alemanno (שער החשק, fol. 45 b, ed. Halberstadt), repeated by Dukes and Rosin², which runs thus:—

הישמעאלים שיריהם באהבים וענבים
והאדומים במלחמות ונקמות
והיונים בחכמות ומזימות
וההודיים במשלים וחידות
והישראלים בשירים ובתשבחות לה' צבאות

a cantor who sings in the Arabic language. Israel Moses Chassan in his ed. (Leghorn, 1869), f. 59, refers to שער אלעזב and מאיואל in vulgar Arabic; he quotes also Isak Alfasi (Berachot, f. 15 b) who forbids songs of praise, &c., which the Arabs call אשער. (This is the source not indicated by Elia di Vidas, ר"ח, ch. 10, f. 104 b, ed. Amst., 1708; see also the Comm. of Ahron ha-Levi to Alfasi, fol. 62, of MS. Munich, 237; I do not possess Bamberger's ed., 1874.) See also Goldziher, *Monatsschr.*, XXII, 180. The Arch-priest of Hita composed many songs for Moorish and Jewish songstresses (see Schack, *Poesie*, &c., II, 47, 127).

¹ *Hebr. Übersetz.*, p. 932; the title is wanted in the *Register*, p. 1035.

² *Reime u. Gedichte*, &c., p. 224; a short commentary is given by Reifmann in ha-Karmel, VII, 224.

Something similar is to be found ap. Jakob ben Eleasar (*Ozar nechmad*, II, 160). Josef ibn Akinin, however, banishes satire, praise, and love from poetry altogether (*Hebr. Übersetz.*, p. 33). We must not omit the fact that even the *metre* of recent Hebrew poetry has been borrowed from the Arabs, probably of the end of the tenth century; the passage respecting Dunasch (ap. Grätz, V, 540, and Halberstam, in the Hebrew *Jeschurun*, VI, 152), is not quite clear.

32. *Collections of Books.*

We are little informed about the collections of books in olden times¹, but as early as the first mention of this subject, viz. in the instruction about the arrangement of libraries in the Testament of Jehuda ibn Tibbon, this author recommends the revising of Hebrew books every month, the Arabic every two months (Zunz, *Zur Geschichte*, 232). Some persons applied themselves to transcriptions of Arabic works in Hebrew characters. So Schemtob ben Isak, of Tortosa (thirteenth century), who travelled on business as far as St. Jean d'Acre, and then settled in Provence and Catalonia, in the preface of his translation of Zahrawi's great work (*Hebr. Übersetz.*, p. 741), relates that, after having finished his study of medicine, he, during twenty years, applied himself to transcribing Arabic works in Hebrew letters for the use of those who knew the Arabic language, but not the Arabic writing. After having seen that, in these countries, in case of necessity, people applied to Christian physicians for help, against the prohibition of the old sages², he began to translate Arabic works³. This remark leads us to a short digression.

¹ Instances of Jewish bibliophiles among the Arabs are Efraim (below, § 35), 'Imran b. 'Sudaka (Geiger, *Jüd. Zeitschr.*, IX, 173).

² Schemtob attributes here to the old sages a prohibition which originally refers to heathen (*Hebr. Übersetz.*, p. 792).

³ Josef ibn Na'hmiyas is not himself a copyist (Hottinger, ap. Zunz, *Zur Gesch.*, p. 429), see *Hebr. Übersetz.*, p. 740.

33. *The Writing in Arabic Characters.*

This subject is not at all an indifferent one, and it is even important as showing that in the history of literature in general some objects are more important than they appear to be. We have seen that the more rigorous interpretation of the Mohammedan rules of tolerance prohibited the use of the Arabic language and writing to Christians and Jews, which should have effected that the latter wrote their Arabic matters in Hebrew characters, the former in Syriac characters (Karschuni)¹. Sprenger asserts that the Jews most probably had in olden times Arabic books in Hebrew characters, though he does not offer any documentary proof². But there were times and circumstances which made the writing in Arabic characters urgent. Jehuda ibn Tibbon in his Testament, quoted already passim, which indeed is very interesting for the history of civilization (Hebrew text, p. 4; German introduction, p. xi), recommends to his son the exercise of Arabic writing, which the latter had begun seven years ago, as a means by which important men of Israel had reached a high rank. So Samuel ha-Nagid, who expressed his thanks to the pen in his poem, beginning: עט אני חסדך מספר ("O pen! thy benevolence I tell!")³. Likewise his son Josef

¹ Comp. Dukes, *Beiträge, &c.*, p. 44, *Karschuni* is, according to Assemani (*Catal. MSS. Biblioth. Mediceae Palat.*, p. 51), derived from Karschun, the first copyist of Syriac in Arabic characters. Mohammed is said to have summoned his secretary Zeid ben Thabit to learn the *writing* of the Jews for the purpose of their correspondence (Goldziher, *Revue des Ét. Juives*, XXVIII, 78). That seems to suppose that this correspondence was to be carried on in the Arabic language, but with Hebrew characters, which is doubtful.

² Sprenger, in the *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1856 (edited 1857), p. 376, comp. 213 (*Das Leben . . . des Mohammed*, I, 56), خشین عیلم, which I have explained by חשבון עולם, comp. סדר עולם for סדר העולם. A. Kuenen, "L'Islam" (in *Revue de l'Hist. des Religions*, VI, 1882, p. 10), designates the thoughts of Sprenger about the pretended old "rolls of Musa and Ibrahim" as *extrêmement aventureux*. Comp. also *Hebr. Bibliogr.*, V, 90.

³ Dukes, קרוים, נדל, pp. 18, 33.

and the Nasi Schechet (see *Hebr. Bibliogr.*, XIII, 106), acquired riches and honours by the same means. At the end of the testament he returns to the same subject, and recommends for that purpose the exact copying of a book written in the Arabic language which has been done by the Nasi R. Samuel [but Schorr suggested privately that we must read here Schechet instead of Samuel]¹, who learned that language without a teacher. Naturally, Maimonides, who lived in close connexion with the Moslems, wrote especially his treatises on general subjects in Arabic writing, and even the original copy, of his medical opinions and treatises for instance, composed by order of the governor and some high officers. To the personal relation between Jews and Christians we shall return. Salomo ibn Ja'isch wrote his commentary on the Kanon in Arabic characters, and his contemporary, Josef ibn Nachmias, transcribed it in Hebrew ones (*Hebr. Übersetz.*, 686). Surely, a great deal of the Arabic writings of the Jews remained partly or entirely unknown to their brethren, while those written with Arabic characters, were conserved either in the original or in Hebrew translation (yet this is more the case with works of more general content). But some specific Jewish labours seem, at the same time, from different motives, also to have been written in Arabic. The discussion of this subject would lead us almost to the first period of the Jewish-Arabic literature proper. Ibn Ezra (to Gen. ii. 11) tells us that Saadia Gaon translated the "Thora" into Arabic language and into Arabic writing (ובכתיבתה, *Catal. Bodl.*, p. 2185). Under Thora Rapoport (Saadia, note 35) understands the whole Bible; Tychsen and others believe that he originally wrote in Hebrew characters. This difference of opinion has a literary importance, because the corruptions of the text must be differently emended by conjecture according to the character of the letters. Geiger (*Jüd. Zeitschr.*,

¹ Dukes (*Litbl. d. Or.*, VII, 798) gives Samuel סמל, but this word is not to be found in the MS., and is probably an addition without the wanted brackets.

I, 188) is not inclined to believe in the Arabic writing. In his eyes it is very improbable, because the Jews never wrote their works in that manner, and Saadia composed his works with preference for Jewish readers. It would even have checked his tendencies, just as if Mendelssohn in the last century would have published his German Bible-translation in German characters (this parallel is, however, not suitable). Geiger further argues: to take Ibn Ezra's report in its verbal sense would oblige us to believe in his having seen the autograph, in order to be able to make this assertion (but this is not necessary at all). Tychsen went so far as to deny the authorship at all, and to attribute it to a Samaritan author. According to his opinion, כתיבה does not mean the writing, but the style. So Isak Israeli (IV, 18) says of Samuel (Tychsen substitutes Josef Satanas) that he was expert in the Arabic language ונכתיבתם¹, "what a ridiculous praise that a man was expert in painting Arabic characters!" Such is the way of general argumentation! Mecklenburg (*Annalen*, I, 228) even proposed to read ונכתיבתם. Dukes, however (*Litbl. d. Or.*, IV, 811), pointed to the Jews being prohibited from writing in Arabic characters. The Morescos also wrote their Arabic with Spanish, and the Spaniards with Arabic characters, and the Mohammedans in Spain wrote their Spanish in Arabic characters (Dukes, *Beiträge*, p. 45; comp. above, § 22, p. 483). Nevertheless, he explains the word ונכתיבתם by caligraphy, which the Arabs and the Jews set a great value upon². He also opposes (*ibid.*,

¹ An old Karaite refutes the opinion of another, that it is forbidden to read on the sabbath a book written in Arabic characters (*Catal. MSS. Lugd.*, p. 109, l. 4). I have (*ibid.*, p. 110) conjectured that the unknown author might be Jeschua; Fürst, *Gesch. d. Kar.*, II, 171, here, as often elsewhere, quotes the conjecture simply as a fact. The question mentioned is treated by Kirkisani (Poznański, in Kohut's *Semit. Stud.*, p. 439).

² "Die Kunst des Schönschreibens ist bei den Arabern, Persern, Türken, ein Hauptgegenstand nicht bloss des Schulunterrichts, sondern eine Art Kunsthandwerk, das auch die vornehmsten Leute oft mit Vorliebe treiben" (C. N. Pischon, *Der Islam*, Leipzig, 1881, p. 63).

p. 45) Geiger, but he suggests that Saadia had in view Mohammedan readers, and that perhaps he was asked by the Khalif to translate the Bible, like Josef ibn Abitur, called Satanás (Santas?), who translated the Talmud into Arabic by order of the Sultan Alhakim, a tale that, indeed, is not yet quite clear in itself.—The opinions being so different, the passage of Jehuda ibn Tibbon offers a sufficient basis to decide that Ibn Ezra means the writing in Arabic characters, and finally Dukes himself (נחל קר', p. 31) came to the same result.

Abd al-Latif, the contemporary of Maimonides, asserts that the latter added, at the end of his book *More* (מור נור, which the Mohammedans, with a slight alteration, called מור נור, *Catal. Bodl.*, p. 1893) a malediction upon those who should copy the work in other than Hebrew characters. But certainly in the lifetime of Maimonides there already existed MSS. in Arabic writing; a proof of that is the circumstance that its translator, Samuel ibn Tibbon, derives some errors from copies in Arabic letters (*Hebr. Übersetz.*, p. 416). Another proof is the commentary of the Arab Tabrizi, probably in the thirteenth century, who certainly did not use a MS. in Hebrew characters; Munk even found a fragment of the book, where the Bible-verses were translated into Arabic. The commentary on Maimonides' codex of law by the Arab Allah al-Din al-Muwakkīt is, indeed, suspected, as we have already said. A much later author, J. Gavison (Dukes, *Nachal*, p. 63), praises his son's, the physician, understanding the Arabic language and using the Arabic writing.

34. *The Position of the Jewish-Arabic Scholars, and especially their relation to the Mohammedans.*

We have formerly considered the rules of the law, respecting the Jews in general, with the remark that the situation of some individuals was an exceptional one;

we now have to deal with this latter, and this chapter is to represent at once *the biographical part of this introduction*.

The lives of scholars, and especially of the Jewish, are monotonous, and the contents and the importance of their writings are rarely illustrated by the events of their life.—If the latter have been collected with great industry, it has been done for different purposes, either to ascertain the time of the writings and their reference to others, or as a means for other purposes, or in consequence of the natural interest and the piety which in our times exhibits itself to excess in the service of autographs and relics. But here we shall, with preference, gather the circumstances of life that characterize the situation of the Jews and their literary activity with respect to their Mohammedan countrymen and the Arabic literature in general, and not only of those whose literary works are known with certainty.

We may reduce the different relations which are merging one into the other, to some categories, as: the personal situation of an author, for instance, in the service of a governor—a public office—a personal relation to an Arabic scholar as teacher or pupil—the influence of the works of Jews on the development of literature. We shall arrange our survey of the most important facts, partly in a chronological order, partly in a material division. But before entering into particulars, we must premise some general remarks¹.

Of the different occupations of the Jews and the literary disciplines they cultivated, there were especially two, viz. medicine and mathematics, that brought the Jews into closer connexion with the Moslems.

¹ The following paragraph in the German language has been inserted, without exact indication of the sources, in Brann's *Jahrbuch zur Belehrung und Unterhaltung* (appended to the *Jüd. Volks- und Hauskalender*), Breslau, 1898, pp. 72–80, and 1899, pp. 38–42.

M. STEINSCHNEIDER.

(*To be continued.*)